

The advertising engine: an interview with Ogury's global chief revenue officer

Raphael Rodier, global chief revenue officer at Ogury, discusses the launch of the business in 2014, areas for improvement in digital advertising and his thoughts on GDPR.

What does Ogury do?

Ogury was founded by Thomas Pasquet and Jean Canzoneri in 2014. They realised there was an opportunity to create a mobile-first technology that deepens and improves the relationships between consumers and brands by systematically requesting consent to share personal data of their mobile journey. This was visionary and very much ahead of the GDPR or CCPA regulations and growing privacy concerns.

Over the years, we've continued to strengthen and innovate. Most recently, we announced the Ogury Personified Advertising Engine. It's a breakthrough advertising technology, built and optimised for mobile, that brings together comprehensive audience interest, brand performance, privacy protection and sustainability. It allows advertisers to leverage non-replicable audience interest knowledge and full-creative visibility, offering sustainable brand advertising results, in total respect of consumer privacy.

In terms of my expertise and experience, I started my work in the ad industry

with HiMedia group, then known as AdUX and acquired by Azerion, where I spent seven years working my way up to managing director. I leveraged my experience here to join Ogury the year it was founded in 2014, becoming one of the company's first employees.

Initially, I started by pitching Ogury's solutions to major media agencies in both the French and UK markets, which quickly became clients of Ogury. Since 2014, I've held several key positions at Ogury, from managing director in France to chief revenue officer and then global chief revenue officer, a promotion I only recently received in January.

What is wrong with the way digital advertising works at the moment?

There are two major problems in our industry, one focused on data, and the other on viewability.

Let's *start with data*. For far too long, advertisers have been wasting their precious ad budget believing that they have been reaching their target audiences. Many companies have been basing their digital marketing technology on a limited view and understanding of the audience's mobile journey data across their apps and websites. And that's because most technology currently available on the market does not contain sufficient knowledge of an audience's interests.

With consumers becoming more protective over their data and regulations tightening, the pool of available data for ID-based personalisation is only going to shrink further.

Regarding viewability, industry has fallen into what we call 'The Viewability Trap'. Advertisers have been basing their performance on the Media Rating Council's (MRC) standard for viewability, which is 50% of pixels in view for two seconds. This does not support the building of brand awareness and memorability, which is the fundamental purpose of brand advertising.

Unfortunately, marketers end up wasting ad budgets by advertising their brand

to an audience that doesn't even notice their ads or bypasses them at every opportunity because they are irrelevant. This is not what is intended, nor the approach that leading brands seek.

Does the public have misconceptions about data and data privacy?

While the public had previously believed online content was free, they're now aware that their online experience is paid for by their data, used to target them with relevant ads. This consumer awakening is thanks to documentaries like *The Great Hack* and *The Social Dilemma*, plus high profile data breaches, which have made consumers aware of the opacity in digital advertising.

Consumers now understand that their data has value and that they need to protect it. And now, the vast majority don't want to share their personal data and be tracked.

Personalised advertising has brought a lot of angst to consumers, making them feel their privacy has been invaded. A change is needed. That is where Ogury's Personified Advertising Engine comes in — a solution that goes above and beyond other solutions, offering the most complete knowledge of audience interests on the market. It is designed and optimised to ensure premium brand performance and protection.

How can advertising actively help the consumer, and how do we build a landscape where this is possible?

We know consumers don't hate all digital ads, just the irrelevant and invasive ones. Coupled with their desire to protect their privacy, the advertising industry needs to build an ecosystem that doesn't rely on consumers' personal data or identifiers to target consumers.

If advertisers work with solutions that deploy intrusive ads which rely on personalisation without explicit consent, they risk significant reputational damage. To avoid this, advertisers should focus on technologies that are data safe and sustainable. Total respect for consumer privacy is the only answer.

Is GDPR sufficient regulation, or do we need more? If so, in what areas?

Data regulations like the GDPR and the CCPA are essential for establishing a trusted digital ecosystem and to give consumers control over their online experiences. I believe that privacy regulations are the right steps forward for the digital advertising industry. But, it still has a long way to go in terms of enforcement.

Privacy and respect for the consumer are in Ogury's DNA. We have placed consumer consent at the centre of our technology since our creation in 2014, four years prior to GDPR's introduction in 2018.

As consumers and regulators fight invasive digital tracking and the market adapts to a new privacy-centric world, we are well-positioned to offer a technology that connects together in the same engine: comprehensive audience interest, brand performance, privacy protection and sustainability.

Could you talk us through some of the ad campaigns you've facilitated?

Our technology offers sustainable branding impact to brands across the globe, including Levi's, Dell, Disney and GSK in the UK. It enables consumers to discover their brand and products through engaging ad formats. We also work with a strong network of publishers, providing them with the right AdTech solution to monetise their app or mobile website content.

For example, we recently worked with Text+, a leading mobile communications service in the US, to increase its ad revenue without compromising the user

experience. Text+ turned to Ogury to implement our latest format, Thumbnail Ad. Thumbnail Ad is a discrete ephemeral ad unit that appears in a precise location, to minimise disruption to the user experience. After implementing Thumbnail Ad in-app, Text+ saw a 16% increase in fill rates and an overall much stronger eCPM than banner ad rates for example, generating significant incremental revenue

What have been the biggest professional challenges during lockdown?

Ogury's teams across the globe continue to show resilience in the face of the pandemic's ongoing challenges. The pandemic has shifted how every team member interacts with one another and how we do business as a whole. Despite these challenges, we have successfully managed to maintain our company culture while upholding Ogury's values.

Our team's ability to persevere through these tough times with grit has enabled us to continue our growth internationally. We have also managed to successfully break into new markets including Australia, New Zealand and India.

What is your daily routine?

A habit that has always been part of my daily routine is checking the weather forecast first thing in the morning. Both my parents worked outdoors when I was growing up in the south of France, so as a family it was important for us to know the forecast before they left the house. Nowadays, I'll wake up and check the weather on my phone.

In terms of rules I live by, I try to make the best use of my time to boost a healthy work/life balance. These days, especially when the boundary between work and home is so blurred, time is so valuable. I make sure I spend quality time with my team to help support their work, scheduling in 10 or 20-minute catchups instead of exchanging a dozen emails, which is often an inefficient way to get work done. I also really value time spent with my wife and our two lovely children – having uninterrupted quality time with them outside of work is what's most important to me.

Raphael Rodier is global chief revenue officer at Ogury.

